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Auth CS, USAF
7 Oct 1950

AFOIN-E
ColPorter/la/71110
7 October 1950

9 OCT 1950

2-16268
T.S. CONT.
D.I. HQ USA

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Estimated Enemy Strength in North Korean Campaign

1. It is estimated that the effective ground strength of the North Korean Peoples Army in the forthcoming operations above the 38th Parallel in Korea will not equal the effective strength of the North Korean forces which took part in the campaign in South Korea from 25 June to 1 October 1950.

2. Further, it is estimated that the Chinese Communists will continue to support the North Korean Peoples Army with large numbers of individual personnel and substantial amounts of Soviet-type armament, equipment, and supplies, but will not intervene openly with combat units when U.S. and other UN ground forces cross the 38th Parallel in Korea.

3. No ground Divisions now in the North Korean Army match the quality of any of the six original regular divisions (1st to 6th NK Divisions, incl) which initiated the attack on South Korea. The maximum number of North Korean divisions identified at any single time around the UN perimeter in South Korea was 13. These 13 divisions which were all understrength, aggregated an equivalent of approximately nine full strength (10,700 personnel) divisions. In the UN offensive which commenced 15 September, it is probable that the North Korean Divisions south of the 38th Parallel were destroyed as effective fighting units. New division identifications are beginning to appear in the North Korean Order of Battle but it is believed that these will have a much lower order of effectiveness because of the heavy losses of lower echelon leaders in the campaign in South Korea, lack of uniformity in organization and equipment, and shortage of supply.

4. The maximum personnel strength of the North Korean Army in the combat zone in South Korea was estimated at 130,000, including corps and service troops. It is conservatively estimated that not more than a quarter of this number (30,000-35,000) were able to get back above the 38th Parallel. Allowing for an estimate of 50,000 in training camps in North Korea, plus a maximum estimate of 80,000 Chinese Communist personnel of Korean descent still remaining in Manchuria, it is estimated that the reasonable maximum North Korean military strength to be encountered north of the 38th Parallel is 165,000, a force which is not organized into an effective combat division.

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Authority NND 913055
By CR NARA, Date 3/11/94

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5. Although there are estimated to be 600,000 Communist troops of all types in Manchuria, there are believed to be only 155,000 combat troops included in this total with another 210,000 well-trained veterans in the vicinity of Peking. The Chinese Communist Army has concentrated from 3 to 6 armies (actually small corps) with from 9 to 18 divisions (3,000 to 5,000 each) in the Antung Province opposite North Korea. The strength estimate of this force ranges from a minimum of 27,000 to a maximum of 90,000 men a part of which probably consists of Communist personnel of Korean descent. This estimate is included in the total of 155,000.

6. The North Korean Air Force, initially estimated at 140 combat aircraft, has been destroyed. There have been a number of indications of air reinforcement to North Korea but no reliable evidence that this reinforcement has begun or will take place. The Chinese Communist Air Force is estimated to consist of 40 light bombers, 120 fighters, 40 ground attack and 20 transport aircraft for a total of 220 aircraft in tactical units. In addition, reports have been received which indicate there may be 200 additional aircraft of all types. There are known to be 30 Soviet jet fighters in North China with reports indicating the presence of an additional 30. Well founded reports from North China indicate that German aircraft technicians have arrived in that area. If Chinese Communists or Soviet aircraft are introduced into the campaign in North Korea, they may be flown and maintained by German and other volunteers from the Soviet satellites.

S/
C. P. CABELL
Major General, USAF
Director of Intelligence

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